

Research Seminar: Theatre and History (A005489)

Course size	<i>(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)</i>			
Credits 10.0	Study time 300 h	Contact hrs	50.0 h	
Course offerings in academic year 2023-2024				
A (semester 2)	English	Gent		

Lecturers in academic year 2023-2024

Van Oostveldt, Bram LW17 lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2023-2024

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities (main subject Art History, Musicology and Theatre Studies)	10	A
Master of Arts in Art History, Musicology and Theatre Studies	10	A
Exchange Programme Art Studies	10	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Theatre, Theatricality in Arts, Historical Experience, Presence of the Past

Position of the course

In depth theoretical and cultural historical study of the experience and presence of the past in theatre and theatrical phenomena in modern history

Contents

"The past is a foreign country, they do things different there" writes L.P. Hartley in his novel *The Go-Between* (1953). Although at first sight this quote may accentuate the strangeness of the past, by conceptualising the past in terms of place rather than time, the quote also opens the possibility of visiting and thus experiencing the past. The idea of historical experience is a hot topic in more recent theoretical debates about our dealings with the past. Within the attention in historical writing for phenomena such as (cultural) memory, lieux de mémoire, the spectrality of the past and the like, the problem of the paradoxical and sometimes difficult persistence of the past in the present is put to the foreground. The past then is no longer considered as dead material that is fixed in the obituaries of historical writing. As Frank Ankersmit stated in his seminal book *the Sublime Historical Experience* (2005) the past can also be regarded as a living agent in the present that can be tracked down and 'located' with concepts such as epiphany, the sublime or historical sensation and experience.

When the past in new and innovative thinking about history has become 'topical' rather than temporal, we could ask ourselves if the theatre can also be thought of as a 'locus' that makes the past present. And indeed, recent theatre-scholars have put forward the notion of the theatre as a memory machine that in many different ways and on many different levels not only incites memories of the past, but sometimes produces a 'living experience' of that past. How can the theatre function then as a 'locus' for experiencing the past and what textual, visual, auditive and even tactile strategies are used to achieve this by the public? These questions will be of central concern in this seminar.

Initial competences

- To have sufficient knowledge of theatre historiography and of the diverse methodologies in theatre studies.
- To have sufficient historical knowledge of the theatrical past and its reception.
- Being able to use the theoretical knowledge and academic skills acquired in the Bachelor.

Final competences

- 1 Having acquired knowledge and insight in the way how the past reappears in theatrical phenomena throughout history and cultures
- 2 Having acquired knowledge of theoretical notions such as 'Historical Experience', 'Hauntology', 'Nachleben', 'Lieux de Memoire'.
- 3 Being able to instrumentalize fruitfully and critically the theoretical concepts underlying this course.
- 4 Being able to formulate research questions concerning the themes of the course and critically investigate them.
- 5 Being able to conduct individual research on a specific theme of this course.
- 6 Being able to present the acquired knowledge in discussions, in a collective and individual presentation and in an academic paper.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Guided self-study, seminar

Extra information on the teaching methods

Research seminar with group presentation on course topics. Presentation and peer review on research paper. Individual supervision for research paper by the teacher.

Learning materials and price

- Syllabus with texts in different languages (via Ufora)
- Students notes
- Handouts from presentations (via Ufora)

References

Course content-related study coaching

Prof. Dr. Bram Van Oostveldt
 Interactieve support via Ufora
 office hours: each Tuesday 14h to 16h

Evaluation methods

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period

Assignment

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period

Assignment

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation

Participation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation

examination during the second examination period is not possible

Extra information on the examination methods

- Periodic evaluation:
 - Research paper
- Permanent evaluation:
 - Group presentations on course topics
 - Final presentations of individual research

Calculation of the examination mark

- Periodic evaluation: research paper 60%
 - Permanent evaluation: group presentation 20% and final presentation 20%
- The student must have taken all parts (paper, group and final presentation) of the periodic and

the permanent evaluation in order to obtain a pass mark for the course unit.